241 Besides weeding, there is much to be done to protect the crop,
[789] Hail storms do a lot of damage at times, and to protect the crops a
" medicine " is employed called ' migalo magalo pe." This consists
of herbs tied in a bunch to the top of a pole about 6—8 feet high,
which is stuck in the middle of the field. (Herdsmen too, use this
[231] to keep themselves dry while out with the cattle, and I have seen a
herdsman accompanying the cows with these herbs tied to the top
[674] of his spear.) Except in time of famine, stealing from the crop is
unknown, which contrasts favourably with complaints made from time
to time that Natives steal maize and coffee from European farms.
In their own community such an offence is practically unknown. But
241 four-legged depredators are a serious problem in certain localities.
●417 Fields are enclosed in fences of the branches of thorn trees, laid on
the ground, and these do give a certain protection against wild pigs,
136 monkeys and baboons. But they are of no use against hippo and
elephant. To protect crops, mainly sweet potato, against the hippo
it is the practice to erect a small temporary hut, which is occupied at
night by a guard armed with a couple of spears. It must be a weary
business, for the potatoes are cultivated close to the lake edge where
mosquitoes swarm, so between the hippo and the mosquitoes the guard
[224] must have a trying time. In old days before the Game laws came in,
organized hunts were held, which were very successful.

241 The most difficult animal is, of course, the elephant. These have
136 disappeared from Central Kavirondo but still infest districts like
Mirunda and Sakwa in South Kavirondo. They can do heavy damage
both to millet and sweet potato. The beating of pots and pans is tried
to scare away the elephant, while occasionally the more daring venture
forth from the hut to throw stones or otherwise drive away the beasts.
This is an operation attended with peril in the dark of the night, and
occasionally lives are lost in this way. Lives too are lost through
guards mistaking their fellow guards for wild animals. Jok, one of
the most famous of ancestors of the Luo, is said to have lost his life
in this way. The story is that before going off to drink beer, he
told his sons to go on guard in the field that night. They refused to
his face, but when he had gone thought better of it, and went on
guard. He returned from the beer drink, and went to see what was
happening in the field, believing that there was no guard. His sons
mistook his footsteps for that of a pig, and speared him with fatal
results. Similar things still occur from time to time.

241 Birds, especially weaver birds, are a pest as the grain crop
136 ripens. Scarecrows are employed, both mechanical and human. Of
the former an inverted cooking pot on the top of a short pole is a
857 common device. Boys are employed in large numbers when the birds
are most troublesome, and their harsh cries are quite a part of the